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FOREIGN AND INSULAR.

ARGENTINA.

End of bubonic plague.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *June 21, 1900.*

SIR: I have the honor to inform you that I am advised by the Argentine minister at this capital that his Government officially declared, on the 6th instant, the territory of the Republic free from the bubonic plague.

Respectfully,

JOHN HAY,
Secretary of State.

Hon. SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

BELGIUM.

Reports from Antwerp.

ANTWERP, *June 11, 1900.*

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith abstract of bills of health issued during the week ended May 9, 1900, at Antwerp, Belgium.

Bills of health were issued to 4 vessels, all of which carried cargo. Steamship *Westernland* sailed for New York on the 9th instant, carrying 48 cabin and 398 steerage passengers. Eight were rejected at the examination held previous to the embarkation.

The health at this port continues good with the exception of a few cases of smallpox.

Respectfully,

E. K. SPRAGUE,
Passed Assistant Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

The SURGEON-GENERAL,
U. S. Marine-Hospital Service.

ANTWERP, BELGIUM, *June 12, 1900.*

SIR: I have the honor to report that the occurrence of 1 case of smallpox in Antwerp during the week ended June 2, 1900, was omitted from the weekly abstract of bills of health. There were no deaths from the disease during this term.

Respectfully,

E. K. SPRAGUE,
Passed Assistant Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

The SURGEON-GENERAL,
U. S. Marine-Hospital Service.

BRAZIL.

Plague at Rio de Janeiro.

RIO DE JANEIRO, *May 27, 1900.*

SIR: In my report dated April 28 I mentioned the new cases of plague, that have been made known here. By telegram and also in that report I

have communicated, that the question had been considered finished, as no further cases had been observed. Notwithstanding sporadic cases have appeared, but they have been treated with great discretion. Brazil has celebrated, during the week beginning the 3d of May, the fourth centennial of its discovery, and this national celebration would be essentially affected by the publication or notification of those occurrences.

Sometime ago I learned that continually, principally in the last days of past week, cases of plague had been observed. I had occasion to see both patients and also numerous bacteriological preparations made from them so that I had by my own observation the most certain conviction of the existence of plague at Rio de Janeiro.

In consideration of the presence of a United States squadron in this port, I gave information of my observations to the minister. Then, on the 19th, in conformity with the consul-general, I transmitted the following dispatch: "Since April 8 there have been 19 cases of plague at Rio de Janeiro; since Wednesday, 4. The new cases can not be traced to foci already located. I believe the facts are being suppressed. Private rumors exaggerate. Probably the State health authorities will quarantine. This will be decided within four days." Since that time up to the 22d 2 cases more have been observed; on the 23d, 3 cases.

It is not possible to report correctly on the origin and the spread of the disease. It might be proper to admit that the plague bacillus had been imported a few months ago and had been left here in different places by circumstances that have not been explained. On the other hand, however, it is possible that the plague bacillus may have already existed here at Rio de Janeiro for a long time, and that the disease had been previously classified as "lymphetitis pernicioso," under which diagnosis persons have perished from time to time. Yet it has recently been shown that cases thus diagnosed have proved, under the light of modern investigation, to be really cases of plague. Moreover, a few days ago a patient was transported in a comatose state to the yellow-fever hospital. The diagnosis of yellow fever was made by several physicians. However, by the bacteriological examination the existence of the plague bacillus was shown. Therefore, as from April 8 up to the present 24 cases of plague have been observed, it may be very probable that under other denominations in reality more cases have occurred.

I certainly desire that the health authorities may succeed in destroying entirely the germ of plague at Rio de Janeiro. But I am inclined to consider it somewhat possible that we may become accustomed to the constant appearance of sporadic cases of plague.

It seems that the conditions at Rio de Janeiro are not very favorable to an extensive epidemic.

This opinion of a continual existence of plague at this city is also based on a recent observation in which in the organs of a dead rat was found the specific germ. Rats exist here in such abundance that their destruction is almost impossible. That important fact is a very probable explanation of the diffusion of the disease.

At a later period a similar observation was made on other rats, and I had occasion to verify for myself the correctness of the examination. Attention has just now been called to the fact that at several places, especially at the custom-house, a large mortality among rats has been observed.

On the 23d there were in the isolation hospital 15 patients, of whom 4 are almost convalescent. On the 22d the port of Rio de Janeiro was declared suspected and the respective measures were published. There-

fore, I sent you the following dispatch: "Plague slowly increasing. Epidemic, rats. Diagnosis confirmed by bacteriological examination. By order of the President quarantine was declared against Rio de Janeiro."

Among many measures of merely local interest adopted by the authorities the following may be of general interest for the countries outside of Brazil:

Vessels have been prohibited from lying alongside warehouses and docks.

Rigorous disinfections have been ordered in the baggage warehouses, adjoining the national laboratory for analyses, at which dead rats were found some days ago.

At other Brazilian ports passengers arriving from Rio de Janeiro will be subjected to rigorous medical observations for ten days, counting from the date of departure.

The importation of second-hand clothing and rags of any origin, except the wearing apparel in the baggage of passengers, has been prohibited at Brazilian ports.

On the arrival of a vessel carrying third-class passengers the sanitary port authorities may refuse free pratique until the baggage of the said passengers shall have been disinfected.

In order to prevent the exportation of articles subjected to plague germs from this city by way of the port of Santos, vessels from that port are subjected to the same sanitary precautions as those from Rio de Janeiro, and will consequently have to undergo under similar circumstances disinfection at the quarantine station at Ilha Grande.

Sanitary reports from Rio de Janeiro.

In consequence of interruption of the regular information, I have not been able to obtain the figures for the recent official sanitary weekly reports. To-day I can supply them and I add them as follows:

During the week ended April 20 there were 300 deaths from all causes, an increase of 36 as compared with the preceding week; 18 deaths from *accessio pernicioso*, an increase of 5; 9 deaths from yellow fever, a decrease of 6; 5 deaths from smallpox, a decrease of 2; 5 deaths from typhoid fever, none before; 1 death from measles, none before; 4 deaths from beriberi, the same as before; 63 deaths from tuberculosis, an increase of 10.

During the week ended April 27 there were 282 deaths from all causes, 16 deaths from *accessio pernicioso*, 15 deaths from yellow fever, 8 deaths from smallpox, 1 death from typhoid fever, 1 death from diphtheria, 2 deaths from plague, 2 deaths from beriberi, and 52 deaths from tuberculosis.

During the week ended May 4 there were 291 deaths from all causes, 16 deaths from *accessio pernicioso*, 13 deaths from yellow fever, 3 deaths from smallpox, 2 deaths from typhoid fever, 1 death from diphtheria, 5 deaths from beriberi, and 51 deaths from tuberculosis.

During the week ended May 11 there were 248 deaths from all causes, 12 deaths from *accessio pernicioso*, 9 deaths from yellow fever, 2 deaths from smallpox, 4 deaths from typhoid fever, 1 death from diphtheria, 1 death from beriberi, and 48 deaths from tuberculosis.

Bills of health.

Since last report the following-named ships have been inspected and received bill of health of this office:

May 1, steamship *Endeavour*, British, for Port Eads. May 2, steamship *Hevelius*, Belgian, for New York. May 3, steamship *Catania*, Ger-

man, for New York. May 8, bark *Homeward*, Norwegian for Ship Island. May 10, ship *Kings County*, British, for Philadelphia; steamship *Asti*, German, for New York. May 12, barkentine *Good News*, American, for Baltimore. May 14, steamship *Handel*, British, for New York. May 17, ship *Elerslie*, British, for Ship Island. May 18, steamship *Cyprian Prince*, British, for New York. May 22, steamship *Ragusa*, German, for New York.

Respectfully,

W. HAVELBURG,
Acting Assistant Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

The SURGEON-GENERAL,
U. S. Marine-Hospital Service.

BRITISH HONDURAS.

Report from Belize—Fruit port.

BELIZE, BRITISH HONDURAS, *June 15, 1900.*

SIR: The health of this town continues excellent, and equally favorable reports come in from the outlying districts. The death from enteric fever at the hospital last week is the only case of that disease reported since I arrived. I inclose herewith the official weekly report. The mail steamer *Breakwater* (Rivara) leaves for New Orleans this a. m.; only 1 passenger from this place—he is passing through the States to England. We are having light rainfalls almost every day, which temper the atmosphere and render it not unpleasant. Thermometer registers from 79° to 88° F.

Respectfully,

NORWOOD K. VANCE,
Acting Assistant Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

The SURGEON-GENERAL,
U. S. Marine-Hospital Service.

[Inclosure.]

List of deaths registered in the town of Belize from the 8th instant to date.

BELIZE, *June 14, 1900.*

Certified by medical practioner—

Apoplexy 1

Valvular disease of the heart..... 1

Certified by district commissioner or police—

Natural causes..... 1

Certified by coroner..... 0

Uncertified..... 0

Total..... 3

A. K. YOUNG,
Registrar-General.

CHINA.

Plague in Amoy.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *June 23, 1900.*

SIR: I have the honor to inform you that a telegram has been received from the consul at Amoy, China, of this date, reading as follows: "Plague."

Respectfully,

JOHN HAY,
Secretary of State.

Hon. SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.